

Fight climate change to secure economies: Brown

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown Saturday called on the Group of Eight (G-8) industrialised countries to boost their efforts to fight climate change issues for the sake of their economies.

'The world is suffering a triple challenge: of higher fuel prices, higher food prices and a credit crunch,' said Brown in an interview with The Guardian.

'My message to the G-8 will be that instead of sidelining climate change and the development agenda, the present economic crisis means that instead of relaxing our efforts we have got to accelerate them.'

'This agenda is not just the key to the environment and reducing poverty, but the key to our economic future as well,' he said.

He made the call prior to the annual G8 Summit scheduled for July 7-9 in Japan's Hokkaido island amid fears that the G8 countries are likely to back-pedal on their pledges to cut carbon emissions and increase aid to poor countries in the wake of a sharp economic slowdown and oil price spiral.

Brown said the upcoming summit, the first since he took the premiership in July last year, will be judged on whether it rolls back protectionism, supports projects for cleaner energy and comes up with blueprints for reducing global oil and food prices.

He said he would consider it a success if the G8 countries show their unity, give strong backing to a new global free-trade deal and push ahead on climate change and development.

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